



McNeel Mill, Mill Point

The 1981 Pioneer Days souvenir badge features the McNeel Mill which stands beside U. S. Route 219 at Mill Point.

Mill Point had a fort to protect the settlers in the area from the Indians before it had a mill. It is known it was there at least by 1774 and called Fort Day at that time. A family by the name of Day had a cabin on the hill above the Mill. They later settled on the head of Williams River. Joshua Buckley is said to have helped build the fort and it was known as Fort Buckley also. Valentine Cackley [Kackley or Keckley] came from near Winchester about 1778 and the fort and community became known as Cackley. The post office of Cackley was established Feb. 7, 1822, with Valentine Cackley as postmaster. The post office of Mill Point was established in 1835. The name came from the hill pointing off between the two streams of Stomping Creek [not Stamping, according to Richard McNeel].

Valentine Cackley and his brother, John, built the first mill here soon after 1778. The two were sons of Jacob Kackley and the family were farmers and millers near Winchester. John returned to Frederick County and later went to Ohio. The name was Coquelin, a French name, when the family came from Rotterdam to Philadelphia in 1736. Kersheval's History of the Shenandoah Valley says John and Valentine were big boys and good Indian fighters.

Court records show that in 1791 William Taylor, a poor infant, was assigned to learn the art of blacksmithing by Valentine Cackley at his mill.



PIONEER DAYS 1981 — PAGE FIVE

The mill was a round pole [as differentiated from hewed timbers] structure with one run of small stones. Water was the propelling power. In 1808 Mr. Cackley added a sawing apparatus and he thus became not only the builder of the first grist mill but of the first saw mill as well. The water for these mills came from the spring and McNeel Run above the present rock quarry near Stella Cloonan's and not from the spring that furnished the water for the mill now standing.

The Cackleys sold this first upper mill in 1834 to Sampson Lockhart Mathews, who married Nancy Edgar. He was County Surveyor and was the grandfather of the McClintic family; he is buried on the hill overlooking Mill Point.

The land was later bought by Isaac McNeel, who built the present mill sometime around 1860. Joe McNeel, the present owner of the mill and grandson of Isaac, says the mill stones, which were used to grind the cornmeal, cracked corn and buckwheat, were imported from France. They weighed a thousand to 1500 pounds and had to be sharpened every two years with a special chisel as the grooves had to be precise. It took 1½ minutes to make one revolution—if it went too fast it scorched the meal. A water box over the wheel fed the right amount of water, directing the excess over the side, and a gate at the race also regulated the flow of water.

The trunking to bring the water to the mill was first made of bull pine and was an open trough. The water went from the race over the penstock and dropped into the turbine. When this turbine was changed to the present overshot water wheel, round metal trunking to carry the water was installed. A boiler, taken off of a traction engine, aided in dry times.

The mill last ran in 1941. Guy Dalton was the last miller, for about fifteen years. There was a flash flood on the head of Stomping Creek in 1935 and it washed the creek so badly they never could get it built back to run the water through the race properly.

In this flood of '35 the water came within 3 or 4 inches of the platform where the grinding rocks were set. A house washed off of its foundations and a blacksmith shop washed entirely away [someone stole the anvil following the flood]. In the mill the rats floated on boards—it was 3 or 4 years before the rats came back.

Downstream three or four hundred yards there was a mill, known as the lower mill, erected by Valentine Cackley, Jr., a son of the pioneer already named. A more recent lower mill at this location was apparently built somewhat later than the present upper mill. There was a wool carding machine also. This mill was later owned and operated by the Hogshead family. The flood of 1935 washed the foundation and soon part of the building fell in.

--Katherine McClure Beard

McNeel mill

Built about 1846 probably by Sampson Matthews
who sold it to Isaac McNeel

Valentine Cuckley had an earlier mill,
on the same site, which included a saw mill

The mill had water turbines originally -
replaced in the early part of this century by
the overshot wheel, which uses less water than
the turbine

Millers remembered by Dick McNeel:

Witlock
Lum McCarty
Oliver Wilson
J. C. Webb
Guy Dalton

2/14/89 Prices at the Mill Point mill

Wheat, per bushel	\$1.00
Flour, per 100	\$2.25
Shorts, per pound	1/4
Brans, per pound	1
Corn, per bushel	75

Uriah Bird & Isaac McNeel

1/30/90 Ad for sale of mill at Mill Point by
Uriah Bird

9/8/92 Article on Isaac McNeel's mill at Mill Point,
new flour mill recently added.

5/30/01 Isaac McNeel has replaced the old engine
at his mill with a new one

Times 1/11/17 new miller at McNeel's Mill is O.E.
Wilson replacing C. J. McCarty

9/10/14 C. J. McCarty will run the McNeel mill

1/16/47

Mill Days

I will run the MacNeil Mill, at Millpoint, on Monday and Tuesday of each week, grinding bread, meal and feed

G M Williams

11/20/47 notice that the MacNeil Mill is now running on Monday and Tuesday of each week - table meal and feed grinding

specialties

G M Williams

3/11/48 Obituary of George ^M~~W~~ Williams, died 2/18/48, had operated the mill until a week before his death

BRILL

d 44 years, died at Harrisonburg, Virginia, Sunday, October 31, in ill a week. He died at Harrisonburg the night before.

In the afternoon the funeral was held at the Methodist church with the Rev. G. G. Oliver, of Roanoke; Rev. G. G. Oliver, of Covington; and Rev. G. G. Oliver, of Harrisonburg, officiating. The burial was in the New Cemetery. So many friends gathered that the church was packed to the doors and could not get in. As the third child of W. W. Brill, of Marlinton, in Hampshire county, 1887. Of a family of seven, he is the second. His mother, Mrs. W. L. Davis, died a year since. His father, S. J. Rexrode, of Ira Grider, Swift brothers, Rev. R. L. W. O. Brill of Floyd M. Brill, of

Miss Lura Moore, the Prof. John St. Their home has six children, Mar- Sue, Mildred, Lois

thirteen years he was church of his father, brethren, by his father, to Marlinton, he was transferred by Southern Methodist a pastorate of Dr. He took an active, all the work of the

community caused to timely death or the prominent and use- was called as he ver- just as he was com- ing of his powers- once was ripening. one among us who re urgently needed his church, and his

ten years ago Mr. from his home in a position as book- Campbell Lumber Co. promoted rapidly. One of the big com- on the company dis- last year seventeen all purchased their new, moved it to the Peoples Lumber Company. His business was in the business was in the merchantile valley.

from his busi- place in the church of community affairs. member of the church, serving of the local con- a national conference

OLD GRIST MILLS

Under the caption "Our Old Grist Mills," Charles Carpenter writes a piece for the November number of the West Virginia Review. He writes as follows about the McNeel mill at Millpoint, Pocahontas County:

"One old overshot grain mill in West Virginia, barring accidental destruction, will likely stand many years yet. This is the McNeel mill at Mill Point in the Greenbrier Valley. This mill was built by an ancestor of Judge George W. McClintic, of the United States District Court for southern West Virginia, and remained in the ownership of the McClintic family until after the Civil War. The house in which Judge McClintic was born stands on the little hill just above the mill.

"A former mill at this location was built by Valentine Cackley, and the place was long known as Cackley Town. Work on the present mill was started just before the Civil War. Some work was done on the mill during the war, but it was not completed until about a year after hostilities had ceased. Since then, except when undergoing repairs, the mill has been operated without interruption. The mill is at present owned by Dr. H. W. McNeel of Hillsboro, Pocahontas County. The miller is J. C. Webb, who lives at Mill Point.

"The original water-wheel of this mill was a wooden one; but a number of years ago the wooden wheel was replaced by a wheel made entirely of iron. This wheel, twenty-one feet in diameter, is as large a affair as water-wheels go. Its circumference is approximately sixty-six feet, and its face is three feet and a half across.

"The water, which furnishes the power for the mill comes from a large spring a fourth of a mile away. The water is carried along the hillside in a race to a point about a hundred feet from the mill, and is from there conveyed across to the water wheel in a large iron pipe on trestle work. The water wheel, being much larger than the wooden over-shot wheels, catching more water in each pocket, and being more nearly perfect mechanically, revolves much faster than the old-type wooden wheels.

"Although the water-wheel and transmission gearing of the McNeel mill are products of our time, the rest of the mill is old—practically what it has always been. The grinding machinery is almost the same as that in all of the old mills, and the frame of the building and of the mechanism is made of hewed timbers, as in other old mills. A good grinding business is done in this mill, which has already served more than one generation. Corn, wheat, and buckwheat are ground. Flour roller machines have been added to this equipment, as in the Blackthorn Creek mill near Franklin."

ANOTHER PANTHER

Physical proof that there is a pan- ther in the vicinity of Bluefield, Va.,

FAILURE OF THE FARM BOARD

Walter Parker shows clearly and forcibly why the Farm Board has failed—the Farm Board which was Mr. Hoover's attempt to keep his campaign pledge to provide "relief" for the farmers. Mr. Parker marshals conclusive facts and figures to demonstrate the Hoover half-billion dollar piece of furniture has done more harm than good; that it has proceeded on the blundering theory that relief must be provided by reducing production instead of enlarging markets; that instead of encouraging buyers it has placed handicaps in their way; that it has failed to realize that its function should have been one of salesmanship instead of limitation of production.

Note cotton, for example. In 1928-29, the last year of free markets unhampered by the Farm Board, the United States furnished 60 per cent of the world's consumption of raw cotton; in 1930-31, after two years of Farm Board "relief," the United States furnished only 45 per cent. On the other hand, in those two years, cotton grown outside the United States bought by spinners increased from 40 to 55 per cent. As Mr. Parker says, "spinners buy raw cotton produced in any country. Hence when attempts are made to hold the price of United States cotton above a world price, many spinners just turn to cotton produced in other countries."

Profitable cotton growing in the United States depends upon an unrestricted world market, not upon artificial efforts to peg world prices. Practical Government aid to the cotton grower should be limited to helping him to produce the most salable commodity at the lowest cost and to clearing trade channels of all obstacles. World credits now are maladjusted; tariff walls check reciprocal trade. The right sort of Government co-operation can reduce international debt to a practical basis; it can readjust tariff barriers; it could give assurance that Farm Board cotton will not be dumped on an unwilling world market; it could refuse to consider export debentures and equalization fees. "Literally," says Mr. Parker, "hundreds of millions of people on the earth now need the product of United States-grown cotton, but they lack the means of translating their own surplus products into buying power. The most effective 'farm relief' imaginable would come from revived confidence among investors and help to the people who would now buy our surplus were they able to change their own possessions into credit and cash."

—That is the way to farm relief; but it is a way just the reverse of that followed by the constructors and operators of the disastrous Hoover plan of farm relief.—Louisville Courier Journal.

Leslie Beard was hurt by being run over by a tractor last Saturday. He is in the Elkins Hospital with a badly mangled leg and thigh. He was



POCAHONTAS TELEPHONE CO

J. M. BEAR, MANAGER
Marlinton, W. Va.

A PRAYER

Old? yes, and I am glad
To care not; busy years are flown.
Life's struggle soon is over, why be
sad
To meet, Father, Thy throne?

Thankful for riper years;
Thy guard and guidance o'er long
roads we've come
Thy Presence through the day—in
night's dark hours.
Love, light and lead me home.

Stars more brightly shine,
Illumine spirit land more clearly—
divine
Thy cross, Thy ensign, a holier shrine
Than any cross of mine.

Help us to higher plane;
Alone in darkest hours have known
pale lights
Of earth borne angels—there was no
more pain—
Supreme, triumphant flights.

Why should we have a fear,
For Shepherd of the sheep bids us
come near,
Under the shadow of His wing secure,
His loving care is there.

J. W. Price, M. D.
Sunday, October 25, 1931.

—The Masonic Lodges of Pocahontas county met at Marlinton last Thursday night. There were about 130 present. After the meeting an oyster supper was served to them by the Order of Eastern Star, in the dining room of the Methodist church.

Edray District High 19, Lewisburg High 0. That is the result of the football game at Marlinton last Sat-

Upper Mill at Mill Point

Built by Joseph Cackley soon after lower mill was built.

Went to Valentine & James Cackley

~~S~~ Sold in 1834 to Sangerson L Mathews

Went to daughter, Mary Mathews MacClinton

(Mrs Wm H) in 1854

Sold in 1865 to Isaac McNeil who built a new mill a short distance from the old mill

The Cackleys or Mathews ~~had~~^{built} an up/down sawmill at this mill

(WPA, Juanita S Dilley)
1940

McNeil mill building a frame key building, constructed without nail

(WPA, Juanita S Dilley)
1940